THE

PRIMITIVE CHURCH

(OR BAPTIST)

MAGAZINE.

No. CCLXXIX.—MARCH 1, 1867.

Essays, Expositions, &c.

JOHN BUNYAN.

To account for the sufferings of John Bunyan it is only necessary to know that he had a conscience, and that he lived in the seventeenth century. It was then that the love of liberty brought our ancestors into a deadly struggle with civil tyranny and ecclesiastical despotism. The king in his capacity of supreme magistrate and head of the church became the representative of a twofold oppression. In the former character he demanded absolute control over the lives and property of his subjects, and in the latter the right of fixing their religious creed and regulating their worship. Claims so unreasonable were met by the most decided opposition. Charles I. endeavoured to secure for himself the power of taxing his subjects without their consent, and the pertinacity with which he adhered to this unconstitutional proceeding led to the most determined resistance on the part of the people. Hampden, Pym, and Cromwell, placed themselves in the thickest of the conflict. Liberty triumphed. The king lost his throne and forfeited his life. Then came the Commonwealth, after that the Protectorate, and when these passed away, Charles II. ascended the throne of his fathers. The history of the past had taught him that it was not safe for a constitutional king to exercise despotic authority in things secular, he consoled himself, therefore, by attempting to carry out the same idea in things spiritual. He began to reign in 1660, and almost immediately after passed the Corporation Act, by which in violation of every pledge, all who did not conform to the church, as by law established, were expelled from offices of trust and power. Then came a statute against the Society of Friends, by which, upwards of four thousand persons were robbed of their liberty and immured in the various jails of the country. In 1662 was passed the Act of Uniformity, which ordained that differences in religious opinions should be suppressed by force, and that the Book of Common Prayer should be the only rule by which men should worship God. Two years later came the Conventicle Act, which made it unlawful for any one to engage in religious exercises except in the place and manner allowed by the Liturgy or practice of the Church of England. The next oppressive edict was the Five Mile Act, by which, all ministers who did not conform were banished five miles from any city, town, or borough that sent members to parliament, and the same distance from any place in which they had formerly preached.

The state of things which made such laws possible rendered it certain that a man of Bunyan's character would not long pass unnoticed, and accordingly, we find that on November 12th, 1660, when just about to preach from the words "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" he was apprehended on the charge of absenting himself from church and being an upholder of unlawful meetings and conventicles. To narrate the various examinations through which he had to pass would be too long a story for these pages. Nothing can surpass the Christian heroism he manifested in the prospect of an imprisonment which for anything he knew might end in death. Three months had been given him by Justice Keelins to reconsider his decision; at the end of that period the Clerk of the Peace was sent to ascertain whether he was prepared to give up preaching and go to church.

"I come to tell you," said the messenger, "that it is desired you would submit yourself to the laws of the land, or else at the next session it will go worse with you, even to be sent away out of the nation, or else worse than that."

"I desire," replied the prisoner, "to demean myself both as becometh a man and a Christian."

"But you must submit to the laws of the land and leave off these meetings which you were wont to have, for the statute law is directly against it, and I am sent to you by the justices to tell you that they do intend to prosecute the law against you if you submit not." * * * * * *

"I shall desire in all godliness and honesty to behave myself in the nation whilst I am in it. And if I must be so dealt withal as you say, I hope God will help me to bear what they shall lay upon me. I know of no evil that I have done in this matter to be so used. I speak as in the presence of God."

"You know that the Scripture saith 'the powers that be are ordained of God'."

"Yes, and that I am to submit to the king as supreme, and also to governors as to them who are sent by Him."

"Well, then, the king commands that you should not have any private meetings, because it is against his law and he is ordained of God, therefore you should not have any."

"I told him," says Bunyan, "that Paul did own the powers that were in his day to be of God and yet he was often in prison under them for all that. And also, though Jesus Christ told Pilate he had no power against him but of God, yet he died under the same Pilate, and yet I hope you will not say that Paul or Christ were such as deny magistracy and so sinned against God in slighting the ordinance. Sir, the law hath provided two ways of obeying: the one to do that which I in my conscience do believe that I am bound to do actively, and where I cannot obey actively, there I am willing to lie down and to suffer what they shall do unto me."

Bunyan's heroic soul chose the second way of obedience. He felt that no power on earth had a right to compel him to give his countenance and support to a religious system in which he did not believe. His conscience told him that there was no more daring rebellion against God than that which surrenders His rights into the hands of men. He was persuaded that if he wished to "sell Christ" he only needed to acknowledge the usurpation of his royal prerogatives by magistrates and kings, and rather than do that, he was prepared to brave all the terrors of the law.

Accordingly he was left in prison. And the misery of confinement in such a prison none can tell. It was built upon one of the piers of Bedford Bridge, and, including the walls, measured about twelve feet square. John Howard, more than a hundred years after, says of it, "The men and women felons associate together, their night rooms are two dungeons, only one court for debtors and felons, and no apartment for the jailor." No wonder that Bunyan wrote "As I walked through the wilderness of this world I alighted on a certain place where was a *den*." Yet miserable as it was he was happy. He says that "those Scriptures that I saw nothing in before were made in this

place and state to shine upon me. Jesus Christ was never more real and apparent than now; here I have seen and felt him indeed."

We must not suppose, however, that his happiness was never interrupted by seasons of despondency. He was a man, a husband, and a father too. That good woman who brought him as her marriage portion "The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven," and "The Practice of Piety," had already finished her "pilgrimage," and a few months before his apprehension he had married another who nobly advocated his cause in the presence of his Judges. We cannot be surprised that the recollection of the lonely condition of his family should frequently fill him with deep regret, nor that his blind child should occupy a large share of his solicitude. In his autobiography we find him thus narrating his feelings:—"Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world. Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee. But yet recalling myself, thought I, I must venture you all with God though it goeth to the quick to leave you."

Scarcely less painful was the anxiety he sometimes felt about the death he should die. In passing sentence upon him the Judge had spoken of death, and it seemed not improbable that his imprisonment might end at the gallows. He did not fear to die, but he was afraid lest through human weakness he should not in dying glorify God. "I thought with myself," he says, "if I should make a scrambling shift to clamber up the ladder, yet I should either with quaking or other symptoms of fainting give occasion to the enemy to reproach the way of God and his people for their timourousness. This, therefore, lay with great trouble upon me, for methought I was ashamed to die with a pale face and tottering knees in such a cause as this." For some time the fear that he might by his cowardice injure the cause he had espoused continued to distress him. But by the help of God he was at last enabled to gird up all the powers of his great soul for the possible conflict, and he felt himself equal to any event that might befal him. In his narrow cell he had already conquered the united forces of Church and State, and now in anticipation, he triumphs over death itself. "I am for going on," he tell us, "and venturing my eternal state with Christ whether I have comfort or no; if God doth not come in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder even blindfold into eternity, sink or swim, come heaven, come hell; Lord Jesus, if thou wilt catch me do, if not, I will venture for thy name." No sublimer spectacle was ever witnessed on this earth of ours than that of this despised Baptist preacher defying all the powers of darkness to move him from his stedfast adherence to that "liberty wherewith Christ has made him free."

But he was not to die. The *den* on which he had alighted in his journey through the wilderness of this world was to be his abode, where for twelve long years he was to suffer for righteousness. The character of his imprisonment seems to have differed much according to the disposition of the successive jailors who had him in charge. During the earlier years of his confinement he enjoyed considerable liberty and was sometimes allowed to visit his family and friends. On one occasion his merciful jailor permitted him to visit his home where he intended to spend the night, but he became uneasy and at a late hour returned to prison. Information had been conveyed to a magistrate that Bunyan was suspected to be at large, and at midnight he sent a messenger to the jail—"Are all the prisoners safe?" "Yes." "Is John Bunyan safe?" "Yes." "Let me see him." He was called, and, to the astonishment of the witness, came without delay. "You may go out when you will," said the jailor, "for you know when to come back much better than I can tell you." This state of things, however, was only temporary. He either fell into the hands of less liberal keepers, or they were compelled for their own safety to keep their prisoner with greater strictness, for during the last six or seven years of his captivity their is no evidence to shew that he crossed the threshold of the jail.

It is not unnatural to suppose that however courageous and devoted a man

might be, an imprisonment of twelve years duration would somewhat modify his zeal, but upon John Bunyan it had no such effect. The right to think for himself and to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience he held with as tenacious a grasp as he did the first day the prison doors opened to receive him. When he had suffered as long as the royal "Defender of the Faith" thought fit he still spake the same words. "If nothing will do," said he, "unless I make my conscience a continual butchery and slaughter shop, unless putting out mine own eyes, I commit me to the blind to lead me, I have determined, the Almighty God being my help and shield, yet to suffer, if frail life might continue so long, even till the moss shall grow on mine eyebrows rather than violate my faith and principles." Happily he was spared the necessity of acting upon this heroic resolution. The latter part of his life fell upon somewhat happier times, for on September 13th, 1672, in company with many other sufferers for conscience sake he received a *pardon* under the great seal.

While in prison he improved the time by writing several of his most popular works, amongst which was "The Pilgrim's Progress." Now that he was at liberty he devoted himself to preaching the gospel. As a preacher, it may be said of him as it was of his Master, "the common people heard him gladly." His biographer tells us that at seven o'clock on a dark winter's morning, he could gather a congregation of not less than 1,200 people, and that "about 3,000 persons came to hear him one Lord's Day, in London, at a town's end meeting-house, so that half were fain to go back again for want of room, and then himself was fair at a backdoor, to be pulled almost over people to get up stairs to his pulpit." For sixteen years after his liberation did "his bow abide in strength." At last, when on his way home, after a mission of mercy, he was seized in London by a fatal disease, and ten days after, namely in August, 1688, and in the sixtieth year of his age, he gave up the ghost. His last words are, on record, "Weep not for me," he said, "but for yourselves. I go to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will, no doubt, through the mediation of his blessed Son receive me, though a sinner; where I hope we ere long shall meet, to sing the new song and remain everlastingly happy, world without end, Amen!"

Truly we Baptists have a noble ancestry! To say nothing of New Testament worthies, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries furnish us with men to whose faithfulness we shall never know how much we are indebted. Bunyan was only one of a multitude who, rather than surrender the royal prerogatives of Christ and the sacred rights of conscience, endured the loss of all things. The stock, the pillory, imprisonment, exile, and death, were as familiar to them as household words. It was thus they *bought* the truth. For what a poor recompense do many of their degenerate children "sell it." To belong to a sect that has princes for its ministers and kings for its patrons is so much more respectable than connection with a people upon whom the smiles of the world never descend. So it is said. And for such a price some are led to identify themselves with a system which robbed Bunyan of his liberty, and which, if faithfully carried out, would even now fill our jails with the excellent of the earth. May the readers of this imperfect sketch ever prefer to obey the apostolic exhortation, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Southport. J. J.

THE ALIENATION OF THE WORKING-CLASSES FROM RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

A Paper read at a meeting of Ministers, Deacons, and Elders.

A GREAT army of mechanics, artizans, and general labourers, may be seen issuing from our factories, workshops, and shipyards, at noon and night

for six days in the week; what becomes of this great army during the hours set apart by the church for Divine worship? No doubt the reply will be, and correctly, that a part is found in the House of prayer, joining in the worship; but an impression seems to prevail, and we think it is right, that according to the proportion of the population that attends Divine worship, there is not by any means the proportion there ought to be of working-men. The main body of our congregations is made up of employers of labour and small tradesmen, with their respective families, while only a fraction of those who constitute the labouring-classes is found in our chapels. This too, allowing for local differences and exceptional cases, is the prevailing state of things throughout England, but especially in our large towns, where workmen are numerous and well organised, and the difference between capital and labour is strongly marked. Enquiry, we think, will prove that a general misunderstanding exists between the church of Christ at large, and the great body of working-men. These two regard each other with feelings of suspicion and distrust. In our factories, workshops, shipyards, and wherever working-men do congregate, religion, if not actually opposed, is regarded without confidence or respect,—looked at as something of doubtful character and questionable worth, or ridiculed as cant. Christian ministers stand at the lowest point of popularity,—their calling is regarded as useless and their motives are counted venal. They are esteemed a class of men who live in indolence on the credulity of others, whose position is inimical to freedom, and an encumbrance to the country, and who are ever ready to bow in servile obsequience to wealth, and to take the part of the opulent against the operative.

It is, we fear, an unquestionable fact that vast numbers of the working-classes are the avowed abettors of unbelief; although in only a few cases does the unbelief attempt a positive form and settle itself into a creed. It is rather emotional than intellectual; it exists as a strong prejudice rather than a theory; it is the outgrowth of feeling more than of thought, and rarely attaches itself to specific opinions or throws its insinuations into logical shape. But in this form, infidelity is an insuperable obstacle to the progress of Divine truth. It raises between its subjects and the Christian church a strong, high bastion which forbids the two coming into contact. At the same time it baffles our efforts to conquer it. It cannot be encountered by argument; it is impervious to the shafts of logic; it presents no positive front to the assaults of reason; it is strictly non-committal; it cannot be provoked to expose itself, but looks down upon its assailants in dogged, sullen silence, and to reason with it is to argue against a stone wall. Such an unreasoning prejudice is quite as mischievous and far more difficult to remove than any form of erroneous thinking however skilfully sustained. We wish to say before advancing further, that the designation "working-classes," is altogether distasteful to us. The idea it represents is essentially heathen, while its limited application makes it a misnomer. We like not the division of society into classes, but least of all into classes separated and distinguished by mere money. A term which seems to set the labouring man by himself, as if he were a creature *sui generis*, and for no other reason than because he is a labouring man, cannot but be mischievous; and, when occasion seems to demand, none can be more violent against this working-classism than working-men are. Still those to whom the designation is commonly applied should remember that *they* are chiefly responsible for it. They are not isolated units. They form a great organized confederation. They are the only members of society indeed who have made a distinct, combined class; they *have* done it, are doing it now; and no one can doubt that the tendency of their movements is still more widely to sever themselves from all other members of society, and to stand by themselves, a distinct, compact, dissevered class.

Now in any attempt to discover the cause of the anti-christian prejudice that exists in the mind of our labouring population, this fact must be taken into account. It is the inevitable tendency of the growth of class-feelings and

class-interests, to foster antagonism to whatever is supposed to distinguish classes external to our own. And very many among our labouring population have somehow embraced the belief that Christianity and Christian ministers are more favourable to masters than to workmen, and that they look with more leniency on the sins of the rich than on the short-comings of the poor. They are suspicious that in any struggle between the rights of capital and labour the latter has nothing to hope for from the sympathy of the religious. As for Christian ministers, they are supposed from their education, tastes, habits of life, and position in society, to be identified with capitalists and employers rather than with labouring men; when, therefore, religious truth approaches these last, it has to meet a certain hostile *esprit du corps*—it has to contend not only with the natural infidelity of the human heart, but with a growing spirit of clannishness, which gives that infidelity body and makes it strong.

We do not mean to say that, what we have just described represents the only form of popular unbelief existing, but only the most common. The sustenance of *speculative* scepticism demands a considerable measure of intelligence, and is characteristic only of the better educated of the operative masses; with most it remains "a mere prejudice, undefined, airy, indefensible, and yet beyond the reach of regular intellectual assault." Still even among these, an effort is often made to clothe unbelief in the garb of opinion; hence systems of infidelity are hastily seized upon and appropriated, not because they have been calmly weighed, but because they seem to express in definite form sentiments which have been long entertained, "and to offer a theoretic justification of them to the world."

Of course where unbelief assumes a logical shape and attempts to justify its own existence, it is easy to deal with. It presents a substantial, objective, assailable front. Its strength can be examined and measured; proposition can be met by proposition; syllogism can encounter syllogism; the right of truth can be flashed on the sophisms of incautious error, and we neither fear nor doubt for the result. But we must not imagine that when the sceptic's reasoning has been refuted his objection to the gospel has been removed; in truth, it has not been touched. The arguments formally put forward are of course in some cases genuine, but in most they are merely the efforts of a mind ill at ease to justify itself, or the result of a previous argumentative defeat which has taught the necessity of being armed; the unbelief lies further back—it existed before the arguments on which it professes to be built—it will continue to exist after they are destroyed, and those arguments, refuted to-day, will be resumed to-morrow to defend a position, which, for other than logical reasons, the unbeliever is resolved to maintain. The fact is, that where habits of downright vice and debauchery have not blunted the moral powers, a mountain of immoveable, unreasoning prejudice, is the real, though unconfessed cause of the alienation of the working-classes from religious worship.

We would not, however, have it supposed that we make light of the reasons that are formally advanced to justify this alienation, or, that we would hastily brush them aside, or contemptuously dogmatise against them. We think they ought to be fairly looked at and honestly dealt with; we shall gain nothing for the interests of truth by pooh-poohing the arguments, however feeble, that assail it. There is a large and increasing body of working-men who can and do think, whose minds are expanded by reading, whose wits are sharpened by controversy, and with whom it is no discredit for the most enlightened polemic to reason. These, if won at all, will have to be won through their judgments by the force of truth logically put. We will, therefore, indicate some of the most common reasons which these allege for their estrangement from Christianity.

I.—*The differences among Christians, with the difficulty supposed to arise therefrom, or to be demonstrated thereby, of determining what Christianity really is.* It is constantly urged that a system so fruitful in particular districts must be characterised by general uncertainty; that the oracle is too ambiguous

in its utterances to be an infallible rule of faith; and that it is irrational to ask others to exercise implicit belief in a Book which we ourselves fail to interpret with anything approaching to unanimity.

If this reasoning seems to us ridiculously slender, we must remember that of those who employ it, many have a position to maintain, in which a bad argument is better than none at all; and that our denominational differences are so strongly marked as to be the first of our features that arrest the attention of outsiders; while thousands who see those marked differences do not see, as we do, the substantial unity that underlies them. To *them*, the difference between Congregationalism and Presbyterianism is all the difference between diverse, and possibly antagonistic methods of salvation.

II.—*A far more grave objection is that which is made against particular doctrines or statements of the Bible.* The infidelity of Hobbes and Paine, filtered and made respectable by Colenso and Renan, is very prevalent among the working-classes. The last two writers in particular have given an impulse to the spirit of intellectual scepticism, and quickened it into unwonted vitality. Any one accustomed to move among working-men knows that there is not a single principle, supposed to be peculiar to Christianity, but what is constantly and vigorously debated. It would be amusing, if it were not sad, to hear with what confusion different doctrines are jumbled together, how they are handled, and with what ludicrous ease one topic leads to another, until almost the whole Bible has been ranged and ransacked. The Inspiration of Scripture and Eternal Punishments; the Trinity and the Adultery of David; Baptism and the extent of the Deluge; Demoniacal Possession and a Paid Ministry; the Doctrine of Election and the Witch of Endor; the Hardening of Pharoah's heart and the Shipwreck of St. Paul; the Resurrection of the Dead and the wonderful virtue of Sampson's Beard, represent at once the wide range of topics and the hopeless confusion of their treatment.

III.—*The inconsistencies of Professors, the many cases of gross moral delinquency that occur in the Church, and the very slight influence which Christian principle exerts on the minds of the general Christian public.* These are popularly supposed to furnish powers of singular fitness and force for assailing the truth or resisting the appeals of its advocates. The startling instances that are ever and anon occurring of nefarious practices being carried on, and great crimes being matured under the convenient shelter of a loudly uttered religious profession, are made the excuse at least for asserting, even if they are not supposed to demonstrate the *fact*, that all religion is just hypocrisy and cant. It avails nothing that we can point to the insignificant proportion in which the number of such cases stand, to the number in which an unsullied character and untainted reputation attest the genuineness of the profession made. It is instantly replied that, no doubt, there are very many more such cases needing only to be brought to light; or else it is freely admitted that generally, perhaps, the profession is genuine enough, because the people are the honest dupes of an interested Priesthood. To all this are added fierce animadversions on the nature of the professions made and the lives lived by Christian people. Violent contrasts are pointed out between the lip-confession and the life expression. Comparisons are drawn between the declarations of attachment and obligations to the Redeemer, and the general freedom with which his laws are treated and his wishes disregarded. Inconsistencies are exposed between our declaration of the beauty and necessity of unworldliness, spirituality, and self-denial, and our general selfishness, covetousness, and conformity to the world. The profession which Christians make to belief in the transcendant importance of the principles they hold, to the present and eternal interests of mankind, is dragged forward; the logical issue of such a belief is detected, and then compared with the apparent fact that most Christians manifest no interest in the spread of those principles, and scarce move a finger to save a fellow-man from the endless woe to which they profess to believe him exposed. All this, it is alleged, is an irrefragable proof that the Christian profession is a sham, and

that a system which produces such hypocrisy cannot be worthy of serious thought.

IV.—*The merely Professional and even Mercenary character of Christian Ministers.* Working-men reason from our own premises, and though, in many cases, without admitting their truth, yet their reasoning has for us none the less force. It is easy to shew that, if it is incumbent on all Christians to exhibit the spirit, and to live the principles of the gospel, with far more weight lies the obligation on those who avow their convictions on the subject to be so unusually strong that they have assumed the position of teachers of others. That this conclusion is fair we cannot deny, and just as little can we deny that unworthy men have not seldom gained entrance to our ranks, and furnished weapons for those who are only too ready to use them against the entire body. There is a popular impression also, that ministers are not sincere in their professions; that they really feel very little interest in the spiritual, moral, or social position of the working-classes, or indeed of any outside their own congregations; that they are moved chiefly by mercenary considerations; that they are only anxious to fill their chapels with well-to-do people, who are able to pay for religion; in consequence of which their sympathies go naturally towards the rich rather than the poor, and bind them in a league with masters rather than with workmen. If at any time they manifest unusual zeal, and attempt to work beyond the sphere of professional demands, it is imputed probably to their ambition for professional reputation, or sectarian ascendency, if not indeed to their wish to win a call to a higher salary.

Now the question arises, how is the working-man to be dealt with so that his antipathy to the Christian church shall be removed? How is he to be convinced that the church is really moved towards him with profound compassion? In reply to these questions we would suggest that any organised effort specially for this end, is one of the worst expedients that can be resorted to. There must be no organisation of class against class; nothing which can be construed even into the assumption of superiority on the part of one class over another class. "Working-classism" is assuredly offensive to working-men; with some it provokes passive indifference into active hostility, while the better educated or more self-reliant look on with contempt, and only the least manly are won by it. Neither, we think, can the work we have in mind be done by our town and city missionaries. A noble, active, and self-denying band of men these are; doing a great work under great difficulties for very small pay; often receiving in fact a bare livelihood in compensation for the means of living they resigned, to give themselves to the good work. But however successful they may be among certain classes and characters, it is a notorious fact that, save in very exceptional cases, they obtain small influence over working-men. Nor is the reason difficult to discover. They have to encounter a part of the same prejudice that prevails against ministers, arising from the supposition that their motives are venal; with the additional disadvantage that they are often uneducated men, as incapable of grappling with the unbelief and prejudice of the masses, as they are of encountering with trenchant logic and accurate information the fallacies of the leaders of infidel thought. We would respectfully suggest that something more might be done by ministers; that they enjoy advantages for doing it not possessed by any others, and that it is incumbent upon them at least to attempt it.

First.—*Their social status and educational advantages will secure their respectful treatment and attention.* Of course Christian ministers are all gentlemen in spirit and in manners, and happily most working-men are sufficiently the same to meet refined and courteous manners on proper terms. It is only when a polished exterior is spoiled by an overbearing spirit, or ridiculous airs and assumptions of superiority, that it awakes resentment. There is too, among working-men, a profound respect for an educated mind. A minister's ability to supply accurate information on points of popular discussion, to reason clearly with an opponent, to clothe in fitting language notions that have been

vaguely floating in the mind, and to furnish arguments to disputants in distress, secures him a position of power and influence.

Secondly.—*Ministers have it in their power, more than any other class of Christians, to disabuse the popular mind of its prejudice against Christianity.* They are supposed to understand it better, and accordingly their expositions of it will be listened to with more deference than those of others. Moreover, against *them* only does the prejudice exist that they are moved by mercenary considerations, that they care nothing for the toils, and sorrows, and difficulties of the working-man, and that their only object is to serve their own personal or sectarian ends. It is in their power alone therefore,—but assuredly in theirs—to correct this grave mistake, and, correcting it, they will remove one of the most formidable obstacles with which the gospel has to contend when it approaches the masses. Further, it is in their power to stir up the dormant energies and slumbering activities of the church, to carry the whole force of Christian feeling along their own path, and enlist Christian sympathy under their own banners.

We have heard much, lately, of the decline of the power of the pulpit; and if it has declined, it is only because the Christian ministry has resigned its vantage ground of superior spirituality, self-sacrifice, and devotion to others, by conformity to the spirit of the age. Let it descend from its false pedestal of genteel stiffness, and exhibit the apostolic characteristics of patient endurance, heroic self-denial, and abundance in labour, and it will be, without exception, the one great power, before which all others must bow.

Among the agencies to be employed, we should place first *the pulpit*, where we would demand not only spirituality, intelligence, vigorous thought, and common sense, but a more frequent and formal dealing with the varying phases of popular thought and feeling; a more frequent discussion of those religious and semi-religious topics which are known to be freely canvassed, and warmly disputed among working-men. It is to be feared that much of our preaching is too remote for the condition and modes of thought of the masses, to be either deeply interesting or highly profitable to them. We advocate no new gospel; no other gospel than that we have received; but we do plead for such a presentation of that gospel as shall be compatible with the common life of the people.

To a wise use of pulpit power, we would urge Christian ministers, all, to add a more free and unreserved mingling with working-men,—converse with them in their homes and places of labour. We advise no compromise of proper dignity,—this would excite contempt, not confidence; but we do counsel such freedom of intercourse, as shall assure working-men that we regard them as intelligent men and brothers; we do counsel such a manifestation of interest in their daily work and difficulties, as shall assure them that we are not ashamed of their company, and that we are their friends.

We think also that ministers might do much to promote amicable relations between employers and employed, and in doing this they would be removing, we are persuaded, one fruitful source of the alienation of working-men from religious worship. We do not mean that ministers should blindly espouse the cause of labour in all its claims, or become partizans of employed against employers. But between partizanship and entire alienation there is a wide interval, which might be advantageously filled in many ways:—by efforts to diffuse sound knowledge of the principles of political economy; to correct mistakes; to smooth asperities, and soften down hard passions; and by endeavours at successful mediation. It may be urged that employers would not tolerate the interference of ministers; that the public has no confidence in their competency to counsel in matters of business. Perhaps so; what then? There are *moral* laws for trade as well as commercial ones; and most employers would listen with respect to our exhibition of these. It is the duty of ministers to bring the principles of the gospel to bear on the laws of trade, and to demand not mere justice, but the exercise of a Christian spirit between man and man,

whatever may be their relative positions in society. Christianity is wedded to no political system, knows no distinctions of rank, and that minister would be a traitor to his master who permitted those distinctions to influence his action, or who would reprove in the poor what he would wink at in the rich; whatever he had to lose by his impartiality. But we need entertain no fears of loss; thorough, transparent, disinterested honesty would win its way with all classes, and good would ensue.

There are many other points on which we would like a word, but our paper has already passed the bounds alloted to it. We only add that the one thing to be accomplished, is the removal of that unreasoning prejudice against Christianity which exists in the minds of our labouring population. In this work we have said what we honestly think, that Christian ministers must be the principal agents; that if the prejudice grows it must be owing to their remissness or incompetency for their office; that it will be needful for them to lay aside much professional stiffness, and approach more closely, and in more free and fraternal spirit, the men they would benefit; that they must step out of the net of professional routine; that they must be careful to avoid conveying the impression that they are more solicitous to live in the favour of the well-to-do, than to secure the welfare of the poor; that they must strive after that happy combination of the dignity of ambassadors for Christ with the unassuming character of friends, which will alone secure them respect, affection, and confidence; and that they must adapt their ministrations to the mental state of the people,—not to that state as they most imagine it to be—or as accepted theological standards may declare it to be; but as they, by personal intercourse, have ascertained it to be. Then, with spirituality of mind, and habitual reliance on God, they will become the means of removing that alienation from religious worship which now they deplore.

We have done. If we have spoken only of the duties of ministers in connection with this question, it is not by any means because we believe them only to be at fault, or because on them rests the sole burden of action—if our "lay" brethren have any such notion, we beg of them to dismiss the comfortable idea from their minds. We have thus spoken because we think that ministers are peculiarly qualified to lead the way in efforts to remove the evil complained of, because we think they would be more successful than any others, and because we are sure that such is their character, and the confidence of the Christian public in them, that they would draw behind them the full force of the church's sympathy and assistance.

If in our remarks we have seemed to imply censure of the Christian ministry, our brethren will remember that we belong to it ourselves, that we share the censure with them, and fully admit our own blame-worthiness wherein we blame others.

Sunderland. B.

GLORYING IN THE CROSS.

BY JOHN BROWN, A.M., OSWALDTWISTLE.

"But far be it that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."—Gal. vi. 14.

In these words the apostle contrasts his conduct with that of the Judaising teachers, who made a "fair shew in the flesh," *i.e.*, they seemed very zealous of the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation; and constrained the Gentile believers to be circumcised, that they might boast of the number of their proselytes to Judaism, and thus keep in favour with their unbelieving countrymen, the Jews. "As many," says he, "as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves, who are

circumcised, keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh." This base, profane, hypocritical conduct Paul deprecates with the utmost abhorrence. "But far be it," says he, "that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

By the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, some understand the afflictions and persecutions which Paul suffered for Christ's sake. And, it is admitted that affliction is sometimes called a cross, as when Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." It is also true that Paul took "pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake." But by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ in this place, I understand, not the sufferings which Paul endured for Christ's sake, but the sufferings which Christ endured for Paul's sake, when He "bare our sins in His own body on the tree." These sufferings are called the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by the figure of metonomy, the cross being the instrument by which they are inflicted.

When Paul says he *gloried* in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ his meaning is, that such was his affection for the doctrine of the cross, that he esteemed nothing of any importance in comparison with it. "Yea, doubtless," says he, "and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things." "Stupid creature," many would say, to glory in a *cross!* I can easily conceive how he would glory in a *crown;* but to glory in a *cross* would seem extremely absurd. For as the cross was the instrument by which malefactors were put to death among the Romans, to glory in the cross was much the same as if one should glory in the gallows,—it was to glory in a man that had been *hanged.* Such were the views entertained of the cross in apostolic times, and such was Paul's affection for the cross of Christ, notwithstanding all the reproach with which it was associated.

But Paul not only glories in the cross—he deprecates the idea of glorying in *any thing else.* "Far be it," says he, "that I should glory, *save* in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." "For I determined not to know *any thing* among you, *save* Jesus Christ and him crucified." The Jews gloried in their fleshy connection with Abraham; but though Paul was "an Hebrew of the Hebrews," he would not glory in his descent from *the father of the faithful.* They made their boast in the *law*, and gloried in their conformity to its *rites* and *ceremonies;* but though Paul belonged to the straitest sect of the Jewish religion, he would not glory in the strictness of his life as a *Pharisee.* The philosophers of Greece and Rome gloried in their *literary accomplishments*; but though Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and liberally instructed in the literature of the age, he would not glory in the extent of his *learning.* Enthusiasts in all ages have gloried in their *gifts, graces, experience, visions,* and *revelations;* but though Paul was richly furnished with gifts and graces, though he was taken up to the third heavens and heard "unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter," yet he would not glory in *these.* The Judaising teachers gloried in the number of their *proselytes,* and vain, self-seeking ministers still glory in the number of their converts to a *party;* but though Paul preached the gospel over the then known world, and was eminently successful in winning souls to Christ, yet he would not glory in his ministerial *success.* In one word he gloried in the cross, and in nothing but the cross. What was it which rendered that, which was in itself an object of reproach, so attractive in the eyes of the apostle? I answer:—

First.—He gloried in the illustrious person who was crucified on the cross. He knew that that same Jesus who had suffered under every mark of disgrace, was none else than the Prince of life—the Lord of life and glory—the Fellow and equal of Jehovah of hosts. He knew that He, who had recently been put to death as a malefactor, now lived by the power of God, and that he would shortly appear as the judge of the living and the dead. He knew the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became

poor, that through his poverty we might be rich;" and he gloried in the condescension and love of Him, who, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and who, being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, and who became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Second.—He gloried in the character of God as displayed in the doctrine of the cross. In the cross of Christ the name or character of God, as the just God and the Saviour, is written in letters of blood. In the cross, Jehovah appears inflexibly *just;* so just that He cannot pass the least sin unpunished; so just, that rather than allow the honour of the Divine government to be impeached; rather than allow the claims of Divine justice to fail, the sword of justice shall reek with the blood of His dear son. (Zech. xiii. 7.) In the cross the purity of Divine *holiness* shines with peculiar lustre. Never was there such a display of holiness and justice before. God's aversion to sin was seen in hurling the rebel angels from their thrones, and casting them down to hell. His hatred of iniquity appeared in the expulsion of our first parents from paradise, and in the appointment of the cherubim and flaming sword to guard the way of the tree of life, and prevent their return. The wrath of God was revealed from heaven against the unrighteousness of the antediluvian world, when he swept from the face of the earth the sons of perdition with the besom of destruction. But in none of these judgments, nor in all of them taken together does God's holy indignation against sin burn so intensely, as in the tears, and cries, and groans, and blood of his dear Son. In the cross of Christ we have also a glorious display, not only of Divine *mercy*, but of *mercy and justice in union.* Mercy was always disposed to save; but *justice* interposed. The law demanded satisfaction to be made for the wrongs that had been done. In order to remove this obstacle Jesus assumed our nature, became responsible for our sin, and expiated our guilt by the price of his blood. Thus the rectitude of the Divine character is vindicated, the honour of the Divine law maintained, and the sinner saved. Mercy and truth meet together in the cross, righteousness and peace kiss each other in the atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer.

Third.—Paul gloried in the cross as the price by which every spiritual blessing is purchased. Does the believer receive a full, a free, and a universal pardon? That pardon was bought with blood. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins." Is the believer justified before a pure and righteous God? We are "justified by His blood." Is the sinner brought into a state of favour and friendship with God? We were "reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Are we put in the possession of true holiness? It is the blood of Christ that "purifies the conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Do we enjoy the blessed hope of a heavenly inheritance beyond death and the grave? We are begotten to that hope by the death and resurrection of Christ. "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Should not the believer then glory in the cross? If the cross was so precious in the view of the apostle, ought it not to be equally precious in our eyes? If he resolved to glory in nothing else, ought it not to be the great theme of our exultation? Every pardoned sinner ought to glory in the cross, and in the cross alone. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "Where is boasting then? It is excluded."

And should not our affection for the cross loosen our attachment to the things of the world? This was the effect which it produced on the mind of the apostle. "By whom the world is crucified unto me," says he, "and I unto the world." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but

Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Christians are exhorted to "set their affections on things above, and not on things in the earth" from the consideration that they "are dead, and their life is hid with Christ in God.

Faith in the doctrine of the cross will dissolve our connection with sin. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." In proportion as the believer contemplates a suffering Saviour, in the same proportion will a spirit of holy tenderness be induced. (Zech. xiii. 10.) In proportion as the evil of sin is seen in the death of Christ, in the same proportion will the mind be fired with holy indignation against all iniquity. Those who live in sin, however loud their professions of the doctrine of grace may be; however warmly they may contend for sound doctrine; however clearly and eloquently they may preach it, are the *enemies* of the cross. (Phil. iii. 18.) Every day, they "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh." (Heb. vi. 6.)

Poetry.

THE POWER OF WORDS.

(ORIGINAL.)

"No power in words" but empty air tis said,
And comes not in the air with stealthy tread;
Alike death's freezing cold and life's sustaining heat,
A poisoned chalice, or elixir sweet?

"No power in words?" Like a bribed arrow sent,
From a full quiver, on destruction bent;
Or as the gentle hand withdraws the dart,
And tries the wound to close with skilful art.

"No power in words?" said one of ancient name,
A proud philosopher of Grecian fame;
Far rather that my son, with reckless hand, should throw
Stones through the busy streets, than words of discord sow.

"No power in words?" List to the man of God,
When smarting under his chastising rod:
"By words, my inmost soul is vexed and torn,
In pieces broke by contumely and scorn."

"No power in words?" Yon veteran replies;
An angel came to me, in woman's lovely guise;
With gentle hand she staunched my bleeding breast,
With gentler words she spoke my weary soul to rest.

"No power in words?" To yon lone cottage go:
The lamp of life is flickering to and fro,
If Jesus speaks, the dying eye with radiance gleams,
Celestial dawn of an eternal day it seems.

"No power in words?" So thought not Mary as she sat
At Jesus' feet: a blessed precious moment that;
The surging waters of the world are stilled,
She *hears* his words; her soul with heavenly peace is filled.

"No power in words?" That lonely widow ne'er forgot,
The thrilling mention of those words, "weep not,"
He speaks,—the swelling fountain of her tears she dries,
Again *He* speaks:—"Young man, I say to thee arise."

O say not then, that words are impotent and vain,
As God's vicegerents be it ours to reign
Along life's pathway, scattering sweets and flowers,
Softening with gentle words as do the falling showers.

ANON.

Page for the Young.

THE CLOUD WITH THE SILVER LINING.

It was the day of the great Sanitary Fair in the town of Norton—the Fair for which every one had been preparing during the last six months. Mrs. Prince had given all her servants leave of absence for the day, and had promised her little daughter Kate that if the weather proved favourable, she would lock up the house in the afternoon, and they would go to the Fair together. Now, it was one of the bluest blandest days that ever dawned; there was not a cloud to be seen in all the heavens, and the wind was softer than a whisper; you would never have supposed that it meant mischief, and neither did Kate, who had almost decided upon her purchases, and counted her money every five minutes during the morning. She had just learned to write a little, and pluming herself somewhat upon the fact, had made out a tiny list of the articles in which she intended to invest; but her spelling being somewhat phonetic, it ran something like this:

Watch-case for father	so much.
Croshayed matt for mother	„
For turning the Fat-lady	„
Grabag	„
For seeing the old woman who lives inhershu	„
Iscreem	„

You see there are not many superfluous letters in this list, but don't laugh at her, because I can remember very distinctly the day when I thought that spelling of "shoe" quite a feat in scholarship.

As it grew near the time for going, Kate grew more and more impatient, so that she put on her nankeen coat, and got out her new spring hat—a hat magnificent in pink ribbons and blonde lace—and sat down by the window to wait, in an agony of suspense; she looked upward where the sunbeams seemed to splinter themselves against the blue sky, and fall in a shower of gold-dust down through the clear atmosphere, and sift themselves in among the tall grasses; and as she looked, there came up a cloud in the east, a cloud in the shape of a shell, and it grew and grew, and crept on so quietly, writhing itself into so many fantastic figures, that Kate, watching it now pile itself up like old ruined and battlemented castles, now fall into the forms of Giants and Genii, quite forgot that she had been dreading a cloud all day, and that this one was close at hand, till some drops of rain fell on the window-sill.

"O mother, mother!" she cried, "here's a cloud coming up!"

"Never mind, Kate," she answered, "perhaps it's the cloud with the silver lining."

"Perhaps so," said Kate, ruefully; "but it *does* rain I fell it on my hand. I wish it had come up wrong side out." And as she spoke the thunder broke overhead, and the rain fell in rivers. Poor Kate's tears began to flow in concert, but suddenly remembering that she was only adding to the flood, she dried them quickly, and tried to solace herself with counting her money, for the thousandth time or less declaring over and over again that it was only a sun-shower, and vainly urging the rain to go away, "and come again another day;" but it seemed just as though the rain had got wind of the Fair, and came down in haste, "to see the folks there;" and the more Kate besought it to postpone its visits, the harder and faster and heavier it poured, as much as to say, "Don't expect me to turn back, after having come over the hills and far away, for this very end; I can't do it."

Kate leaned against the window and sighed; it was so dismal sitting at home alone, when she had expected a holiday abroad; and what a tap, tap, tap, the rain kept up; how it seemed to laugh and clap its invisible hands; how it dripped off the points of the leaves in long grey ribands; how it cut up the street in numberless canals, and overflowed the ditches, and leaped down the water-spout in a great white curl, and freshened up the bricks, and vexed the sweet voice of the brook into loud complainings, and yet seemed never tired, but always ready for keener sport. The mud was

ankle-deep, Kate knew, and every umbrella fringed with spray, and each passer looked as if he wished he were in some other persons shoes, his own were so soggy; but the rain evidently thought it all a good joke, and worth being repeated; and now and again it appeared to pause and take breath, merely to go to work again wilder than ever.

"O dear! O dear cried Kate, will it never stop? There's all my nice time at the Fair thrown away, because of this spiteful rain!" And her eyes wandered towards her new hat, which her mother had allowed to remain on the piano, because to put it back into its bandbox would have seemed like locking hope up in Pandora's box again, and leaving all the ills at large.

"I mean to go to the door," said Kate, "and see if it isn't bright in the west."

While she stood in the doorway, with her little pink palms held out, and the rain duly filling them, a small dark, childish figure advanced timidly, and asked, "Please will you give me something to eat?" She was such a draggled-looking creature, so patched and dripping, so thin and pale, that Kate almost fancied it was some grey rain cloud, that had taken this guise in order to tease her further, and as she felt quite cross about her own disapointment, she was just going to dismiss her without a crust, when she called to mind that, when somewhat younger, she ran away one day with Nettie Reed, and they lost their way, and it grew dark, and they wandered about half dead with fear, and it came on a shower, and she longed so for the crisp gingerbread the cook was baking as she came out, and how pleased she was to get home to a nice supper and blazing hearth; and remembering all this she escorted the beggar-child in with the courtesy of a princess, seating her before the kitchen fire, which still trembled in a faint flame, and her sympathies being now fairly enlisted, piled on the wood with her own dainty hands, and hunted up dry shoes and stockings, while Mrs. Prince filled her basket with generous morsels from the pantry, and set such a repast before her as caused her to wonder, like the old dame who fell asleep on the king's highway, "If this be I, as I do hope it be!"

"How came you out in such a rain!" asked Kates mother.

"We were so hungry. Mother goes out all the day to work, and she locks us in, and I keep house till nine o'clock; but to-day the bread was all spent, and we ached so, and they cried; and I told the others if they would mind the baby, and not fall out of the window, and not tumble down stairs, and not quarrel, I would go out and see what I could do. And I got out of the window, and—O goodness, I wish Jem and the rest were here!" she added attacking the food.

"Poor child; And where is your father?" asked Kate's mother.

Tears sprang into the eyes of the little housekeeper; she laid down her knife and fork, hesitated, and hid her head, at last, in a corner of her tattered shawl. "O! O!" she sobbed, behind her shield, "he went away once to the war, and he's never come back, and mother, she says we'll never see him again—never, never on earth!" The little creature grew quiet in her grief directly, and added, wiping her eyes, "He wore such a beautful blue coat when he went, and the buttons were so big and shining, and I liked them so that he cut one off for me, though mother said, 'No, no, it will spoil it; but now she's glad, for it's all we have!'" And she drew an army button from her bosom, that was attached to a string about her neck, and burnished it beneath her shawl before showing it to Kate.

"O! O! O!" cried Kate, thinking of her own father, and how bitter it would be if she had only an old brass button to remember him by.

The little housekeeper, having despatched her meal made a movement to go.

"The children are a-waiting for me," she said.

Kate whispered to her mother: There's my blue gingam gown you said I had outgrown can't I give her that? And my old plaid shawl hanging in the garret, isn't it some better than hers?"

Mrs. Prince nodded permission, and

Kate ran up heroically into the great dark garret where she was usually a little chary of going; but you should have seen the amazed and sparkling eyes of the little housekeeper when she found the frock and shawl were her own, and heard her pretty, embarrassed thanks.

"And mother;" said Kate, twitching her by the skirt, and beckoning her into the next room, "can't I give her the money I was going to spend at the Fair? And shall you mind not to have the crotcheted mat I was going to buy you?"

So at length Kate conducted the child to the door, and behold, the sunset painted the west in gold and crimson, and soft pink clouds hovered overhead, and while she gazed into the shadowy east a rainbow, sprang forth, and spanned the gloom; and all the green leaves glowed like glusters of emeralds, and shook off the raindrops in shining showers.

"O," cried the little housekeeper, "the rainbow! the rainbow! Jim is so glad of the rainbow, I must hurry, for maybe he has forgotton to look out—for the hunger of him." And she trudged away as fast as her small legs could carry her.

Kate went back into the parlour, and her mother opened an eastern window, and just then a robin, that had been keeping himself dry under the leaves, and was as low spirited as Kate during the rainy afternoon, hopped upon a slipery twig, plumed himself with a will, and chiruped such a delicious roundelay, that his feathered neighbours, taking the hint, began one and all to swell their little throats, till all the world was one cloud of melody.

"What do you think about the cloud and its silver lining?" asked Kate's mother. "Aren't you glad that it rained after all?"

Kate thought a moment: she thought of the Fate-Lady, and "the old woman who lived in her shoe," the Gipsy Queen, the mysteries of the grab-bag, the odour of the decorations of *Arbor Vetæ*, the delightful murmur of voices, the gushes of laughter, and all the pleasant things she had heard or anticipated about the Fair; then she came back to the poor children locked in with their gnawing pain, to the little housekeeper in her damp rags, to the father, dead on some far away battlefield, and the old brass button so tenderly hoarded; and do you know she actually was glad it rained that afternoon!

"O, yes, yes," she answered, "I see the silver lining; if we had gone to the Fair, the house would have been locked up, and the little children would have gone hungry till nine o'clock—what a very kind shower it was!"

And the robin that had first pitched the tune for all the world suddenly lighted on the window-sill, close beside Kate, opened his little mouth, and seemed to set her words to music. And the sky was full of floating glory, as if the clouds had indeed turned into gold and silver.—*Our Young Folks.*

Reviews.

Theodosia Earnest; or, The Heroine of Faith. English edition, revised and completed. Cloth. Gilt Lettered. Pp. 324. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C.

THIS work is of American origin, but the edition before us contains some additional chapters, which give greater completeness to the story. One chapter in the original work, which was not at all relevant to the main subject, has been omitted in favour of the new matter, so that altogether, this is by far the best edition of the work that has appeared.

The object of the book is to present in popular form the most powerful arguments in favour of Baptist views. "By the use of a slender thread of fiction, these arguments are connected in a way that makes them more interesting and attractive to the general reader." The struggles of a young and enquiring mind in finding its way to the New Testament doctrine of baptism are described with

much beauty and force. At last all ends well, and sacrifices made for God's truth are accepted and crowned with God's blessing.

We do not know of a book more likely to please, and interest, and instruct the young, on the subject of Baptism, than the one before us. It is sure to be read even by those who would turn with distaste from drier books. We desire for this best edition extant a very wide circulation. We ought to add that it is exceedingly well got up.

Living unto God; or, Chapters in aid of the Christian Life. Cloth. Gilt Lettered. Pp. 256. London: Elliott Stock.

THESE chapters are a collected reprint of papers or discourses by such honoured brethren as Culross, Hinton, Steane, Lance, Pratten, Vince, John Aldis, jun., Maclaren, Rosevear, Landels, S. G. Green, Edward White, S. Cox, F. Tucker, T. R. Stevenson, E. L. Hull, (deceased); Haycroft, and Winslow. All the articles are extremely good; some are indeed truly beautiful. The book will furnish many aids to the Christian Life. It is printed on tinted paper, and is altogether brought out in the very best style.

The Garden Oracle and Floricultural Year Book, for 1867. Edited by SHIRLEY HIBBERD, F.R.H.S. Boards. Pp. 120. Price One Shilling. London: Groombridge and Sons, Paternoster-row.

THIS is the best and the cheapest garden oracle with which we are acquainted. Those who delight in floriculture will here find much invaluable information.

The London Quarterly Review. No. liv. *For January*, 1867. London: Elliot Stock.

THIS number of the ever solid, judicious, and instructive London Quarterly contains articles on Religious Prospects in France; Scientific Farming; The Civil Service of the British Empire; Apollonius of Tyana; Swiss Lake Dwellings; Smiles' Lives of the Engineers; Life and Correspondence of Richard Whateley; besides Brief Literary Notices. We can honestly say that this number is fully up to the average of the very best that have preceded it. It is marked by variety, vigour, and freshness, three excellent qualities in any Quarterly.

We must also mention with the highest praise—

The British Workman, for 1866; and *The Band of Hope Review, for* 1866. These well-known publications scarcely require the tribute of our praise. We need only say, that the beauty of the illustrations, and the excellency of the literary matter, in both, are as strongly marked as ever, and that we should be rejoiced to learn that copies of each were to be found in every house in the kingdom.

The Scattered Nation. Edited by C. SCHWARTZ, D.D., and published by Elliot Stock, is a deeply interesting magazine devoted to the spiritual welfare of the seed of Abraham.

We may be permitted, too, to draw attention to the following:—

The Child's Gospel. By JOHN STOCK, of Devonport. Handsome Crimson Cloth, and Gilt Lettered. Pp. 256. Price Three Shillings. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E. C. JUST OUT.

THIS work aims to present a *complete* harmony and summary of the Four Gospels and other related passages of Scripture, but in a style suited to the capacity of a child. It is intended to do thoroughly what "The Peep of Day," &c., &c., have only done partially. Scholars will see that the ripest and most recent biblical criticism has been consulted throughout. There are two elaborate indexes intended to aid parents and teachers in using the work for a reading book. Nearly fifteen hundred copies have already been sold. This work was originally written for the instruction of the author's own family. It represents the labour of the spare moments of the last three or four years. Our readers must judge of the quality of the work for themselves. We simply bespeak their kind attention to the fact of its publication. We may, however, say that the publisher has done his part admirably.

Intelligence.

SAXONY.

BELOVED BRETHREN.—How grateful we ought to be to our God for the many mercies and blessings he continually bestows upon us. His mercies are indeed manifold, for how many are not even those blessings which we generally do not count or overlook as such, and for the which we consequently omit to praise and love our God, though we continually enjoy the good of them. He who likes to think a little could soon furnish us with a long list of such mercies. I now only mention one, and that is *the art of writing and printing*. It is, indeed, a benefit from above, or else we should not have it, and how great a blessing it is. Through it we have the written word of God, the many and cheap Bibles; and what other art or science, I might ask, does assist the glorious missionwork, and promote the extension of God's kingdom so much as this? Again, by this medium we are enabled to converse with each other, and even with many friends at once or by one letter, though separated by the greatest distances. Just by this medium it is that now also I can furnish you with a report of the Lord's work and doings here.

I am happy that I can inform you that the Lord Jesus has graciously been with us all the time since I wrote you last; we had several additions to the church, and on some stations a great desire to hear the gospel has been manifested. The Sunday after I wrote you last, which was on December the 7th, I was in Schkenditz, a small town at the frontier of Saxony, where I always have an opportunity to preach the gospel to the Saxons on Prussian territory. We had, as usually for this purpose, hired the spacious hall of the Senatehouse. The meeting was also attended by our members from Leipzig, with whom at the conclusion of the second service we celebrated the Lord's death, which is the sermon or preaching of the whole church, because at the Lord's Supper every member does preach Christ and him crucified, as he himself says, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, *ye do shew* the Lord's death till he come."

The Lord's Day after, when I was again in Halle, I preached in the forenoon on the chief commandment "Love God above all things, and thy neighbour as thyself," and in the evening on the *Resurrection* of the dead, both the just and the unjust (Acts xxiv. 15); speaking, *first*, on the *certainty* of the resurrection, as confirmed by the oracles of God; the faith of the saints of the old covenant; the bodily reception of Enoch and Elias into heaven; the resurrections that have taken place already; and, —chiefly—the resurrection of Jesus Christ. *Second*,—The *necessity* of a resurrection of the dead; the redemption of Jesus does include, or imply it,—i.e., of the just; the justice of God does demand it—i.e., of the unjust. *Third*,—The *manner* of the resurrection. It will take place through and by Christ (John v. 28); with a change of the body; under the Hosannas of the just and the cry of anguish of the unjust. *Fourth*,—The *import* of this doctrine, it being a comfort and an exhortation to all believers; and, a warning to all sinners.

The following Sabbath the annual examination of the Sunday school in Halle took place, after which, each child got a present awarded to their diligence and behaviour during the year. This occasion, which is generally attended by the parents of the children, as well as by the members and the congregation always proves an excellent stimulant to the good work. In Magdeburg, where we now also have a Sunday school which is attended by about thirty children, we baptised and received during this week—on Christmas Day—two young converts.

The next Sabbath, the last of the year, I was in Altenburg, where then the Conference of our Saxon church took place; already, on the evening

before, we held a church-meeting in which we heard and joyfully received two converts, an old man and a young girl; two others also applied for baptism, but were not received yet, because they had not yet the full assurance of an interest in Christ. That same night we went out of the town to immerse in a certain river, called "the Jordan," the young disciples. Our services on the Lord's Day were unusually well attended by strangers, even by several Methodists, who seemed to be much pleased with our services. The next evening, the last of the year, I was again in Halle where then a love-feast took place, after which, I conducted a prayer-meeting from half-past eleven till one o'clock. So we concluded the old and commenced the new year lying at the feet of Him who is exalted above all time, and at whose feet we found pardon for the sins of the past and a good hope for the future. On New Years Day I preached from Acts xxviii. 15.

The first Lord's Day in the new year I was in Coennern, at the Quarterly Conference of our Prussian church, when I preached in the forenoon from Heb. iv. 16. We considered first, What we should do—come unto the throne of grace; second, How we shall do it—boldly; and, third, Why we shall do it—that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. After the second service of the day we held a church-meeting, in which we received another young girl who had found the Saviour and heartily desired to follow him in baptism. Though it was severely cold that night, most joyfully she walked down into the river, esteeming it, as she said, an honour "to feel cold with Jesus." When we returned to the meeting-house, we sat down at the Lord's table, and afterwards enjoyed the continued blessing of the Lord in a lovefeast which lasted till after midnight.

During the same week, it being the first of the year, our churches and stations held prayer-meetings every evening, and we, indeed, found it good to draw near to God. We felt refreshed by these meetings and ourselves encouraged to accept Dr. Carey's motto, namely, "to *ask* great things from a great God as ours, to *expect* great things from him, and to *venture* great things for him." We also have seen already an answer to our prayers in the conversion of a young woman in a neighbouring village, where of late I preached occasionally, and in two other converts at Altenburg. I have found again and again, as also in this case, that the best and most successful preaching is proclaiming, and even picturing, or showing the people Christ Jesus, in his love and worth, in his life and death, in his shame and glory. But we expect yet more conversions and greater things from our God, though there were (as at present, with several enquirers there is) even no probability of it. However, we ventured. We hired a larger meeting-hall, which also costs us double the money we paid hitherto, and where our services will commence, D.V., next April. Again, Lord's Day before last, I invited to a special meeting all the young, unmarried females of the church, who after prayer and some deliberation then formed themselves into a missionary-bond, its aim being the honour of Jesus in the extension of his kingdom, which aim they hope to reach by regular prayer-meetings for the coming of Christ's kingdom, as well as by sewing, knitting and working various articles which afterwards shall be sold for the mission. A similar bond exists already among the young male members.

Besides my journeys and the various duties as pastor and preacher, I have been engaged of late in composing two new Tracts, "How is it with your soul?" and, "Remarkable Conversions;" further, I translated for the German Tract Society two English Tracts, "Milton on Baptism; Points of difference, etc., by James Smith;" and some "Monthly Messengers;" which, all are printed at Mr. Oncken's, in Hamburg. May they prove seed sown upon the waters.

Whilst we deeply feel that we come far too short in all that our Lord demands from us, and we owe to him, we would bless him for the little we

are permitted to do in his vineyard, and gladly praise him for the success he has granted us, and may he ever enable us to ask, to expect, and to venture great things from and for him, then certainly we shall see wonders and finally sing the joyous everlasting song of the redeemed before his throne.

Asking your continued prayers and sympathy for ourselves and the good cause in our old home Saxony,

I am, yours,

With the best respects,

Moritz Grissler.

Halle, January 30th, 1867.

AMERICA.

LETTER FROM REV. DR. CHAPLIN, NEW ORLEANS.

The Committee appointed by Congress to investigate the massacre of July 30, is now here, and is attracting much attention, furnishing special occasion for editorial comments. A strong effort was made by the city government, headed by Mayor Monroe, to bring this committee under their influence by flattery and hospitality. It was arranged that the City Council should receive these gentlemen on their arrival from Washington, conduct them to elegant apartments in St. Charles Hotel, and entertain them at the expense of the city. A room for their official business was also to be furnished in the City Hall, and assistance to be rendered in the work of examining witnesses. It was a lovely programme, but the committee spoiled it by directing their secretary, Col. Eaton, to provide rooms for them at the St. Louis, where also they conduct their investigation. They went quietly to their hotel, and the next day commenced their work with earnestness and manly independence, for which every honest patriot will honour them. Mr. Elliot of Mass., and Mr. Shellaberger, of Ohio, are not men to be cajoled or menaced. And while the members of Congress generally are taking their Christmas holidays, these men are hard at work. They have already taken a large amount of testimony, which will be greatly augmented, and the whole or a full statement will, doubtless, be given to the public in due time. His honour, the Mayor is soon to appear before the committee. What sort of a statement will he make? We shall see.

We are flooded with Congressmen just now, for a large company, among them Benj. Wade, of Ohio, are here on an excursion. These gentlemen have been laid hold of by the City Officials and leading citizens and are found more susceptible to the soft impressions of hospitality than their brethren of the Investigating committee. But I presume that meats and drinks, for the last of which this city has an unparalleled reputation, will not seduce sturdy republicans from their loyalty. *Timeo Danaos et Dona ferentes.* Pardon this Latin; but it does throw so much light upon a dark subject, as our friend Dr. Colver once said on a memorable occasion.

There have been two noteworthy fairs in this city—one Agricultural, the other Benevolent. The first was not equal to similar occasions at the North, which have there become established "institutions," but it was very well managed, and will, we trust, encourage public sentiment in the direction of skilled labour and varied industry. The Charitable Fair was gotten up by the ladies for the purpose of assisting those who suffered by the war, Confederate soldiers and Confederate widows and orphans. The object was a good one, for surely the Southern people ought to care for those who suffered in their own "lost cause." But what the need of displaying the confederate colours—red, white and red—in the curtains which draped the numerous windows, and in the tents within which articles were for sale; and we may ask, why in the theatres, we speak from report — "rebel" songs are sung and applauded? On one such occasion it is said that some hisses were heard—but from whom? From the coloured people in the gallery! This distinction, between white rebellion and black loyalty, is apparent every day. In this city a white man builds a dry goods store, and has the words which Booth uttered at the assassination of President Lincoln, *Sic Semper Tyrannis*, cut in bold relief on the stone front. A coloured barber commences his humble business, and runs out his pole with its Esculapian spiral in loyal colours, red, white and blue. Shall the former be allowed to vote, and the other be disfranchised? How long shall we put a premium on treason, and hold loyalty at a discount? Where is the justice, where the honour of such a course? But great events are "marching on" as some southern people have the good sense to acknowledge. Too many, however, alas for themselves, and the peace of the country—are slow to discern the "signs of the times." "Having eyes they see not, having ears they hear not." The grand movements of Providence, introducing a higher civilisation, and lifting up an oppressed race, to manhood,

have no meaning to them. It is all confusion, the result of blind fanaticism, bringing calamity to one race and destruction to another; for the blacks, we are told, are destined to die out. But, considering this subject in no higher than its material aspect, are nor the blacks indispensable as tillers of the soil? The experiment of white labour at the South has failed. Germans, who have in a few cases been placed on plantations, soon become discontented; and the prospect of Chinese coolies is not very flattering. Here at the South is the black man's home, and here, with any sort of encouragement, he will live and thrive. He cannot long be kept from ownership of land. The Homestead Bill is already giving homes to coloured people. In Louisiana there are 3,000,000 acres of Government land yet unoccupied, two thirds of which, however, are hardly worth the gift. The best "homestead" lands are in the western part of the State, but there, at present, the settlement of negroes would be attended with serious difficulties, arising principally from the opposition of hostile whites. The only safe way for blacks will be to settle in colonies, sufficiently large for self protection. Dr. Saville, the Government Agent at New Orleans, has located about 100 families, seventy of them coloured. A section of eighty acres can be had for twenty-eight dollars, eight of which goes to the Government, and twenty pays for the surveying. Transportation to the section purchased is furnished *gratis* by the Freedmen's Bureau.

There is a plan on foot to introduce a large number of coloured labourers into Louisiana from other States. Here the land is richer and can yield a readier and surer support than in some other states, especially North and South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama. The suffering from poor crops which is so terrible in these states is *comparatively* slight in Louisiana.

In many cases, there is great injustice practiced upon the blacks by the planters. This is especially so in the more northern sections of the States. The labourers are very ignorant, particularly in the back country, and are the victims of their employers. The written contract for labour is made out by the planters and handed to the blacks for signature, which is effected by touching the tip of the pen, but they must trust wholly to their employer for their knowledge of its terms. And if the contract be fair, the fulfilment of its conditions is often far different. Each planter, in many sections, has his little store where the people on his place are expected to buy their groceries, &c., and at his own exhorbitant prices. At the end of the year little or nothing is found left on the wages. But in the lower parishes, with some exceptions, the planters seem to be more honourable men. I am personally acquainted with some of these characters who are dealing fairly by their workmen and are getting their reward. On some of these plantations schools are being introduced. One gentleman, a Southern planter, proposes to build a school house. In another place, the employer offers to pay a coloured Baptist minister who will also teach a school, 60 dollars a month and "rations." Of course he will tax the labourers, say a dollar and a quarter a month each, for this purpose, but they are willing to pay this amount, so great is their desire to have their children educated. The planters generally prefer coloured teachers. One reason is, the difficulty, almost impossibility, of finding a boarding-place for a white teacher, especially if she is from the North. Many well-qualified, coloured teachers could now find employment at a fair compensation, but it is hard to find them.

At the present time there are probably 3,000 coloured children at school in this city. Only some thirteen schools are under the direction of the Freedmen's Bureau; the rest are private. For many years, even long before the war, the free people of colour had several excellent private schools in New Orleans. This class of coloured people, particularly the French Creoles, i.e., the descendants of blacks who were in the country before its purchase by the United States, in 1806, are very aristocratic in their feelings, scorning to be ranked among negroes and freedmen.

We may here remark, that the term Creole applies to the offspring of the original settlers of Louisiana, whether white or black, principally of French or Spanish descent, and speaking those languages. The term Creole is also here given to the productions of this region, in distinction from such as come from abroad. Thus we have Creole beef, Creole eggs, Creole butter, to distinguish these articles from what are brought from Texas, or the North, &c.

The Creoles of this State usually speak French as well as English. They have a marked physiognomy. Generally the men are spare, sharp-featured, with black eyes long black hair, and small delicate hands and feet. They are mostly of medium height. The term Creole is here one of honour, and some families, in this city and on their estates, pride themselves on their

descent from old aristocratic families in France. One of this class, a chivalrous old gentleman, famed in former days for his prodigal hospitality, recently died in a neighbouring parish, at an advanced age. The war made dreadful havoc among the "chivalry," bringing low many a haughty baron, who gloried in his "gentle blood" and his numerous vassals. The vassals have left him, and his "blood" cannot maintain his dignity. Many young men of this class perished in the war, and others are compelled to enter the grand army of workers and earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. Some have the good sense to take kindly to the new order of things, but too many grumble at the abolitionists, the Government, and perhaps, Providence, while they sigh over the blissful past, which shall never return. Stern necessity must compel obedience to the laws of God, which have so long been violated, and then will come to the South a future happier than she ever knew in her palmiest days of slavery. The few will go under, but the mass, including the oppressed race, who are beginning to be reckoned as human beings and citizens, will be lifted up, and the comforts and refinements of life will be more equally diffused, while knowledge and religion will have tenfold sway. Why will not the southern people forget the past, and press on to the things which are before?

The General Superintendent of Education in the Freedmen's Bureau in this State is Lieut. Frank R. Chase, from Michigan. He is a Baptist, which is a good beginning, and is deeply interested in the welfare of the blacks, as respects education and religion. At a recent coloured Baptist Convention he gave an address full of excellent advice.

There is a coloured Orphan Asylum here, under the sole management of the Methodist Church, North. Madame Mortie, the matron, is, I learn, going North to make up a deficiency of 5000 dollars on the amount required for building an Orphan House. Her Methodist friends will, no doubt, give her a generous welcome.—*From The Christian Era.*

INDIA.

NUMEROUS baptisms are recorded in the letters and journals of Indian missionaries; and in many instances, a peculiar interest attaches to the circumstances by which the convert has been led to Christ, or enabled to maintain his convictions against domestic persecution. Perhaps the most remarkable case this month reported is that of Rati Ram, the chief guru or high priest of the sect called Ram Suehs. This man, who for more than 25 years has been literally worshipped by his devoted followers, has been constrained by deep convictions of guilt and danger—convictions which have burnt in him as a fire, and agonized his whole soul—to give up all for Christ; to forsake his temple, his habits, and his sect, and publicly to avow the Lord Jesus Christ as his Master and Saviour. For some time he had been an inquirer at the mission bungalow, and at length, when brought low by repeated attacks of illness, he was led to avow his altered convictions, and request baptism. Mr. Shoolbred, of Beawr, who visited him, narrates the whole history. "I urged him," he says, "to ponder well the step he desired to take, and to question with minute scrutiny its grounds. As a last and crucial test, I proposed that he should quit, for a time at least, the Ram Dwara, where he was honoured and worshipped as a god; renounce the dress and position of a gura, and come and live with me, that both his bodily and spiritual health might receive constant attention. He unhesitatingly consented—had, indeed, already made up his mind to this decided step. But as he claimed the Ram Dwara and its belongings as his property, built by money collected for and by himself and his guru, from whom he inherited it by right of succession, he only asked delay till the following morning, that he might dismiss two novitiates who were paying a passing visit, and see to some loose property being put away. Accordingly, next morning, Baboo Chinta Ram assisted him in making his arrangements, and as he was unable to walk from weakness, I drove up in the buggy at sunrise; he locked up the premises, and returned with me to the bungalow. You may imagine the consternation of the *bunias*, who, when they came to pay their mornings devotions to their priest, and prepare for the lying and swindling of the day's traffic, as is their wont, by counting a few long rosaries to the name of Ram, found the priest flown and the monastery locked! A deputation

speedily made their appearance at the bungalow to demand the key; but their quondam guru's reply was, that he intended returning to the Ram Dwara after a time, and till then it would remain closed." For some days there was considerable suppressed excitement in the city. It was not long before the bunias came forward to claim the Ram Dwara, and appealed to the magistrate for his assistance. After some discussion, as important issues are involved, the commissioner declared the Ram Dwara closed, and held by government until one of the parties made good their right to its possession, the onus of prosecuting in the civil courts resting with the *bunias*. At the baptism, members of almost every caste in the city were present. "The court officials, in fine muslin dresses and gay turbans, jostled with smoke-begrimed smiths, naked to the waist; Brahmin pundits and city porters stood shoulder to shoulder and side by side with thrumming Bambis bunias; some of them Ram Suehs, who had appeared in the court, stood and scowled on him at whose feet they had formerly paid honours no less than divine. Large and mixed, however, as was the crowd, the utmost silence and decorum were preserved." At the same time another convert was baptised, one who in a prison cell had been led to contemplate the words of salvation, which he had lightly heard when a free man in his native village.

Female education is rapidly assuming a more important place in missionary correspondence from India. Of the work done by native female evangelists in Sewry, as distinct from zenana visitation, the Rev. F. Reed, of the Baptist Society, writes:—"Their visits are generally made in the cool of the day; they then go together to some bari and make known the purpose of their visit. If they receive a cordial reception—which is most often the case—they sit down and begin to read a tract, or a portion of one of the Gospels. In the meantime neighbours come and sit down; in this way frequently twenty or thirty women are collected together. After the reading is over the passage is explained, and the hearers are urged to trust in the true Saviour. This is perhaps followed by a little discussion, and, at times, by candid acknowledgments of the truth of what may have been said, and by the desire to hear more. Our agents have met with both encouragement and disappointment in their work." The deaths of missionaries are reported from various points of the mission field; amongst them of the venerable Rev. T. Williamson, of the Baptist Society at Sewry; also of the Rev. J. P. Cassidy, of Poona, who is well known not only as an efficient labourer, but as having refused the aid of societies, and, as far as possible, maintained himself in his work without cost to any.—*From The Freeman.*

BAPTISMS.

BEXLY HEATH, S.E.—M. Frith, baptised five in September, four in October, four in November, three in January, and fifty by baptism and dismission during the ministerial year.

HASLINGDEN — PLEASANT-STREET.—December 4th, two; February 3rd, ten, by Mr. Prout.

SALENDINE NOOK, NEAR HUDDERSFIELD.—On Wednesday the 26th of December last, in the afternoon, five candidates were immersed by the Rev. J. Parker; also, February 2nd, in the presence of a large concourse of people, nine candidates were baptised; it was a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

AT SUNNYSIDE, NEAR RAWTENSTALL, LANCASHIRE.—February 3rd, 1867, a young man, by the Rev. Thomas Evans.

MARRIAGES.

EATOUGH — TAYLOR.—On January 31st, 1867, at the Baptist chapel, Blackburn road, Accrington, by the Rev. Abraham Nichols, of Sunnyside, Mr. Robert Eatough, son of Mr. Daniel Eatough, Draper &c., to Mary, eldest daughter of Mrs. Betty Taylor, of Abbey street, Accrington, and the late Mr. Edmund Taylor, of Crawshawbooth near Rawtenstall, Lancashire.

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